



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN
Commissioner

Memorandum:

TO: Senator Eric Coleman
Representative Gerald Fox
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Commissioner Patricia Rehmer, DMHAS

DATE: February 24, 2013

SUBJECT: Written Testimony on Senate Bill 152

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee: thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 152 An Act Concerning Court Support Services.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services administers the drug education portion of CGS 54-56i the Pretrial Drug Education And Community Service Program. We are writing to express our support for Sections 7 and 8 of SB 152 AN ACT CONCERNING COURT SUPPORT SERVICES that modify CGS 54-56i. We have worked in concert with the Judicial Branch to make recommended changes to this program and appreciate their willingness to include these changes in their proposal.

Providers contracted to DMHAS conduct a clinical evaluation for defendants who apply to the court for this program. Based on the evaluation, the providers then forward a report to the court and recommend an appropriate level of intervention to adequately address their drug use. The current statute provides two options for intervention for second-time users of the statute, a fifteen-week drug education program or a more intensive substance abuse treatment program of not less than fifteen sessions, but the statute provides only the former option for first-time users.

Section 8 of SB 152 adds the option of a substance abuse treatment program for first-time users of this program whose pattern of drug use has progressed to a point where a more intensive intervention is required to aid behavior change. Section 8 also replaces the old term "drug intervention" with "drug education" to be consistent with the other portions of the statute that use "drug education". Section 7 also deletes a remnant of the earlier terminology. The Branch is suggesting an amendment to the language in Section 8 of the bill and we support that change as well. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.